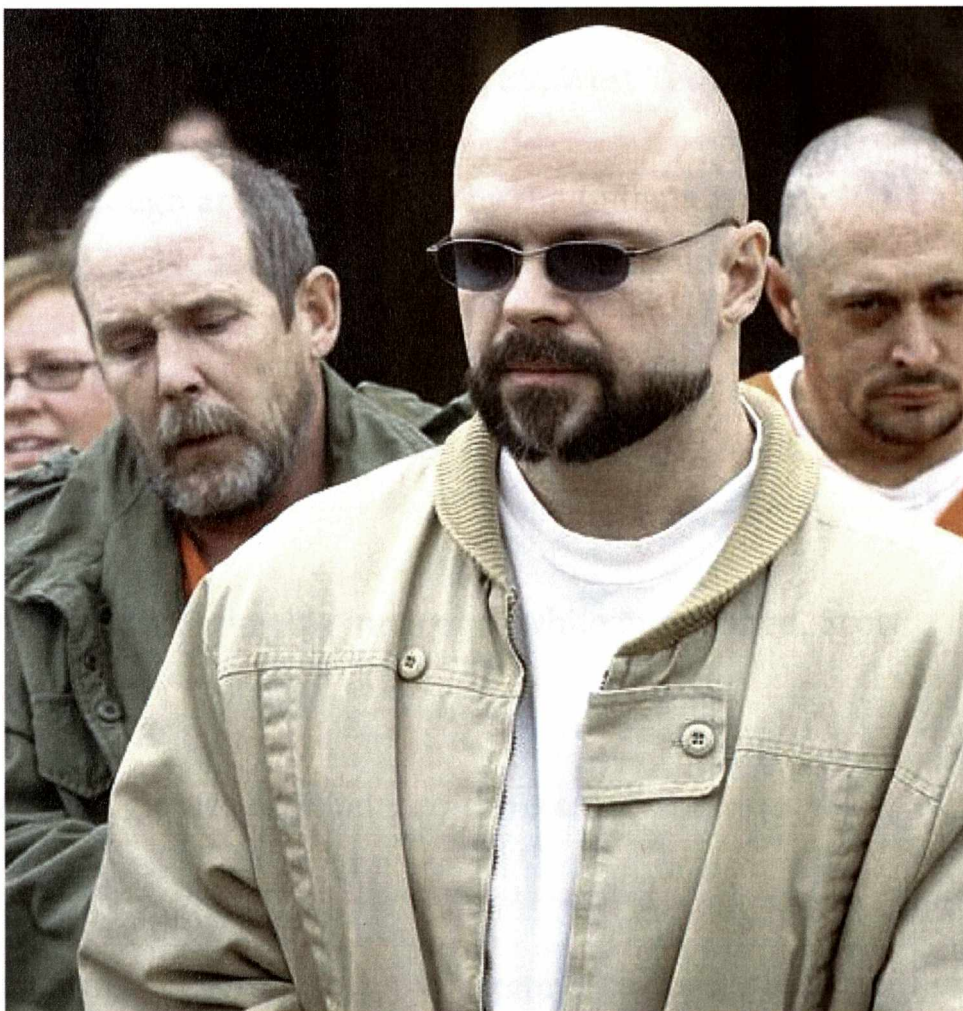


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Wrongly convicted, Scott now a free man

By Brian M. Boyce

Jan 29, 2008



One last walk: David Scott walks to the Vigo County courthouse from the jail one last time. Scott was freed after serving his sentence.

Jim Avelis

Terre Haute News, Terre Haute, Indiana- TribStar.com



In a small room on the courthouse's fourth floor, David L. Scott's shackles were removed for good Monday morning.

A small assembly of old friends and family greeted Scott earlier, as he and three other inmates were led in shackles from the elevator to Vigo County Superior Court Division 6.

Scott had been brought from the Miami Correctional Facility in Bunker Hill for the filing of a petition on his behalf by Prosecutor Terry Modesitt asking for his immediate release based on new evidence in the 1984 killing for which he was serving a 50-year prison sentence.

Scott was convicted in 1985 for the murder of Loretta Keith, 89, West Terre Haute.

But new DNA evidence obtained through an investigation by the Indiana State Police has led to the arrest of Kevin Mark Weeks, 44, of LaGrange, Ky., for that crime instead.

Weeks, who was arrested Friday in Kentucky, is expected in Shelby County (Ky.) District Court at 1 p.m. today to be arraigned. He is being detained in the Shelby County jail with no bail.

After 23 years and four months of maintaining his innocence while imprisoned, Scott was released just before noon.

Scott, wearing street clothes and sunglasses, was led into the courtroom, where he waited his turn to be heard.

The court's proceedings began around 11:20 a.m. with the state of Indiana's case against a single mother for shoplifting and then against a man for violating his probation.

Scott watched, silent, as Judge Michael Lewis granted Lori Olsen release on her own recognizance until her trial, after she tearfully explained that she had a job interview Monday afternoon and a 5-year-old son with no one to watch him.

The state of Indiana versus David L. Scott began at 11:30 a.m., when Modesitt informed the court of the petition for release — jointly filed by his office and Scott.

Lewis set the court at recess while he reviewed the petition, meanwhile Scott sat silently at the defendant's table in the courtroom.

When Lewis returned, he announced that the petition had been received and reviewed and said, "Mr. Scott, you're free to go."

And that was that.

Scott was taken out of the courthouse through a back stairway, declining to make any comments or public remarks.

Friends and family also repeatedly said "no comment" on the case, except for sporadic remarks of outrage about "he should have been freed a long time ago," and "corrupt judicial system."

Several of those identifying themselves as friends of Scott's family noted their hope for a civil trial against the state for wrongful imprisonment, but all vehemently said they did not want to have their names made public.

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